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ASTRO BOY™

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VOLUME ONE OF TWO (B&W)

THE ORIGINAL ASTRO BOY 14

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LETTERED BY
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COVER BY
KEN STEACY
ORIGINAL STORY AND CHARACTERS BY
DR. OSAMU TEZUKA

FUN IN THE SUN, WITH A PROTON GUN!

There's an annual comic book ritual which takes over the downtown San Diego Perfoming Arts Expo Center the first week of August.

This little extravaganza, called simply; The San Diego Comic Convention has publishers, dealers, artists, writers, etc., from all over the world. This year's convention (August 4-7), attracted over 10,000 people.

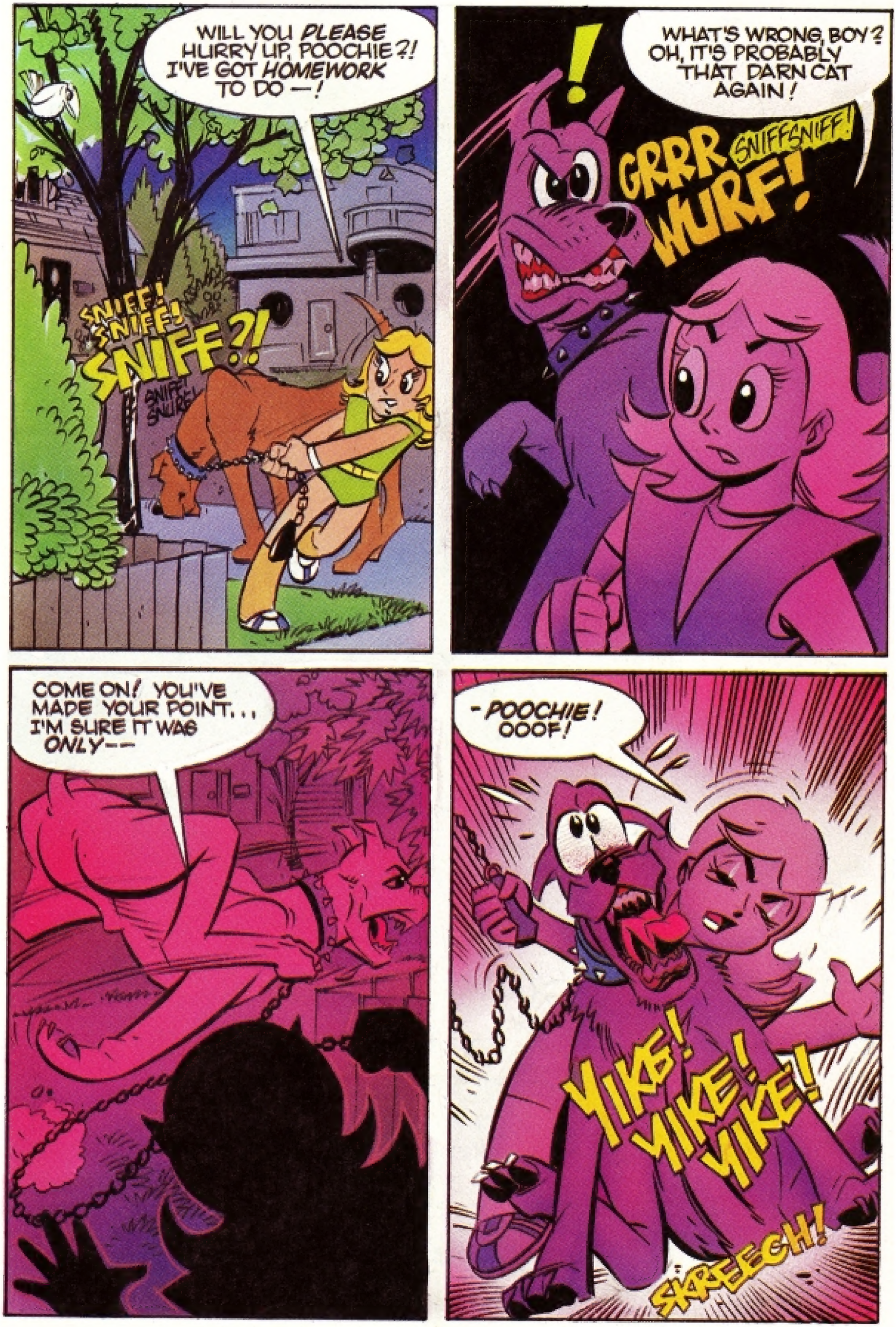
NOW COMICS was there, and we brought a few extra special treats. Within our three large booths was a replica of the ECTO-1 car used in the GHOSTBUSTERS movie. Along with this twenty-one foot automobile were three individuals dressed as Dr. Ray Stantz, Egon Spengler, and Janine Melnitz. And popping up every once and a while was a seven foot StayPuft Marshmellow Man!

Also at the NOW Comics' display was the art team for THE ORIGINAL ASTRO BOY comic, Andrew Pratt and Ken Steacy. These two talents are also the creators of THE REAL GHOSTBUSTERS monthly cover art (notice they only work on books with three word titles). Brian Thomas was also there, the inker for both THE REAL GHOSTBUSTERS and RACER X. Brian will be working on the ASTRO BOY backup for a few upcoming SPEED RACER comics!

Jim Van Hise, the man behind the stories in THE REAL GHOSTBUSTERS was there occasionally to sign some autographs. Jim informed the crowd of the upcoming GHOSTBUSTERS movie sequel which is scheduled to go into production this November, with a 1989 release date!

Usually, these conventions consist of answering thousands of questions, signing autographs and staying on your feet for twelve hours. It can be quite tiresome, but at this one, after seeing the hundreds of children (and adults), with eyes full of wonder and joy as they walked up to our booth made it much easier on our feet!

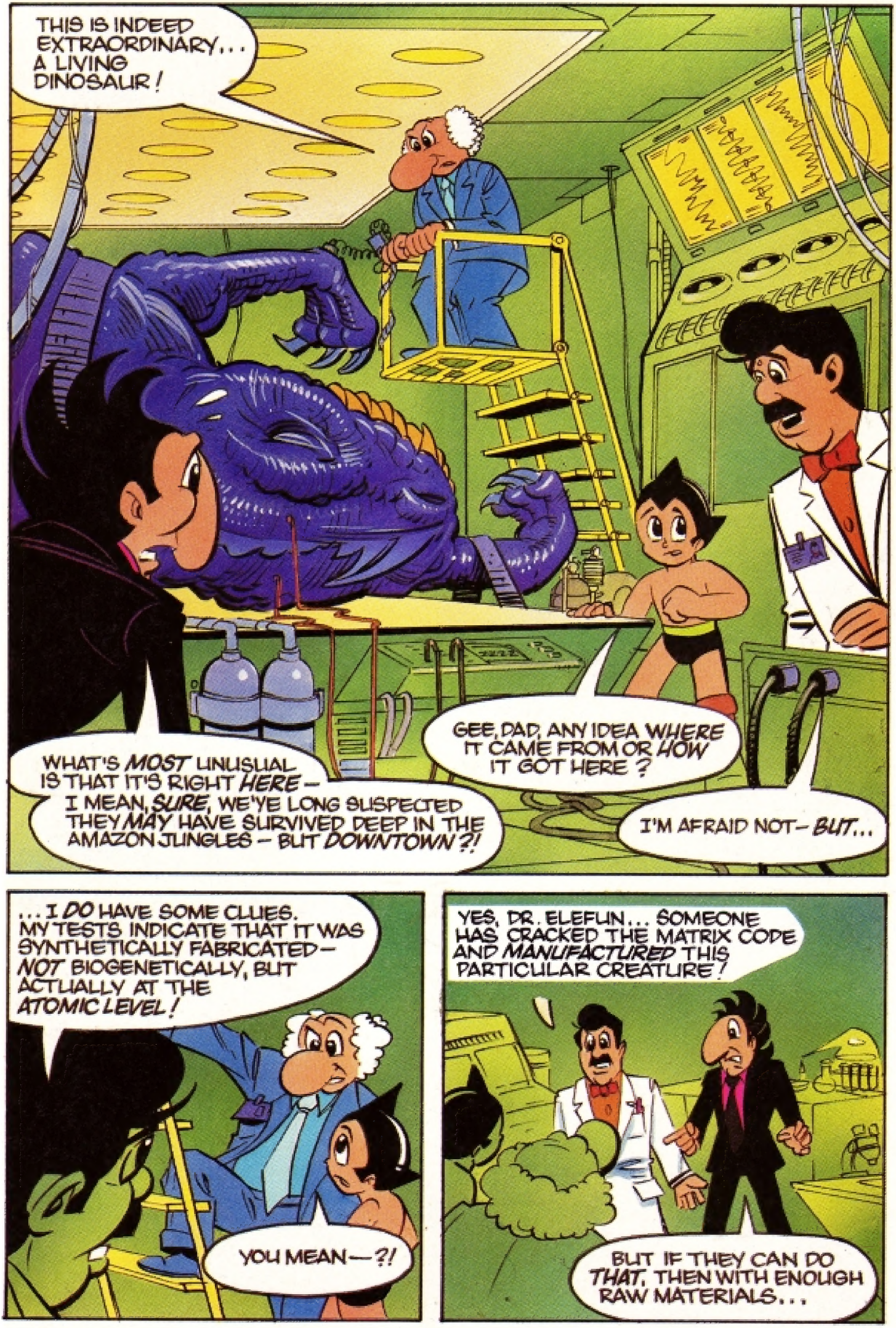
Tony Caputo
Publisher
Editor 'n Chief

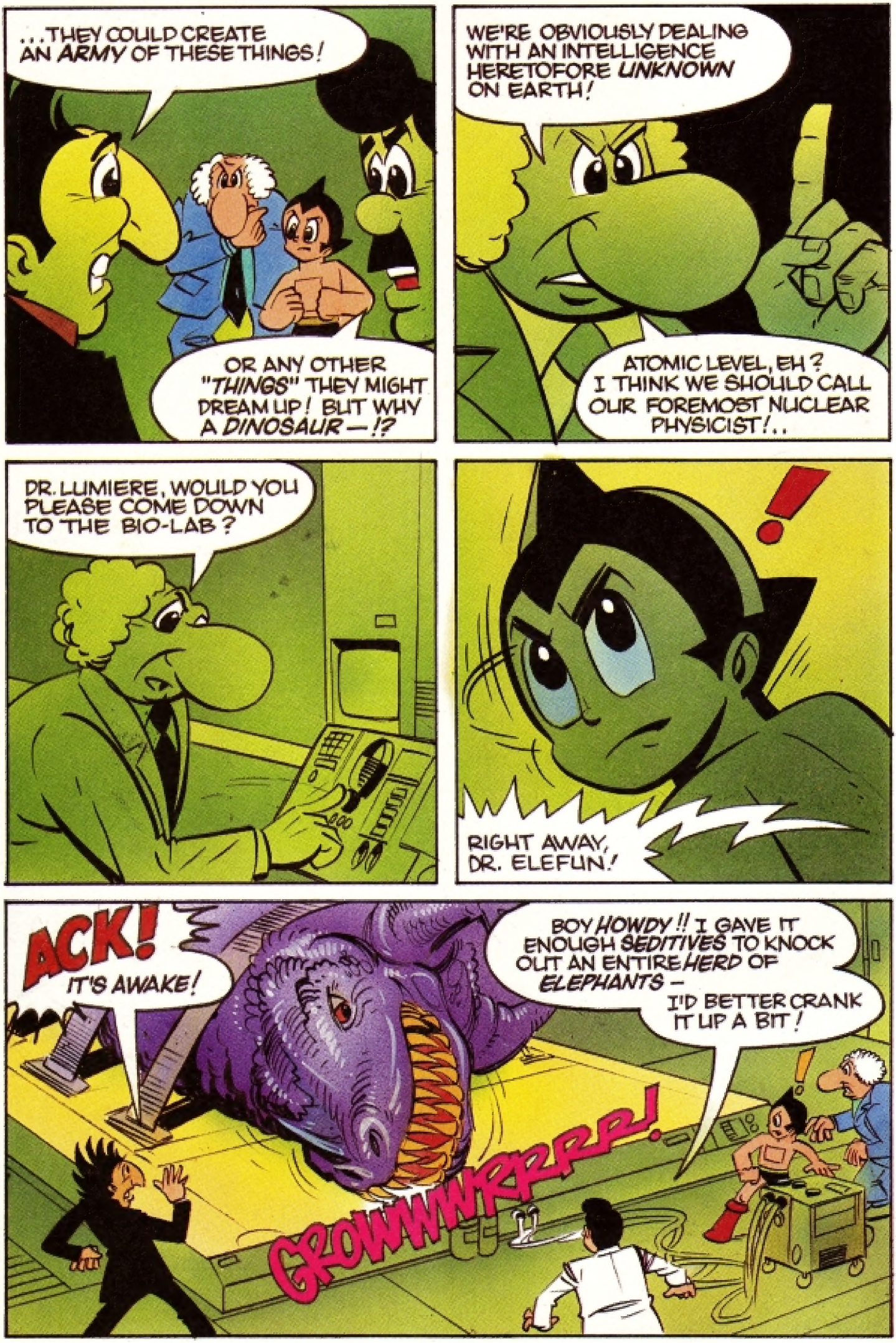

WILL YOU PLEASE HURRY UP, POOCHIE?! I'VE GOT HOMEWORK TO DO —!
SNIFF! SNIFF! SNIFF?!
SNIFF! SNURF!
WHAT'S WRONG, BOY? OH, IT'S PROBABLY THAT DARN CAT AGAIN!
!
GRRR
SNIFFSNIFF!
WURF!
COME ON! YOU'VE MADE YOUR POINT... I'M SURE IT WAS ONLY--
-POOCHIE!
OOOF!
YIKE! YIKE! YIKE!
SKREECH!

PRATT '88
GRONK!
IT'S... IT'S IMPOSSIBLE! A... A...
DINOSAUR
ON MY STREET?

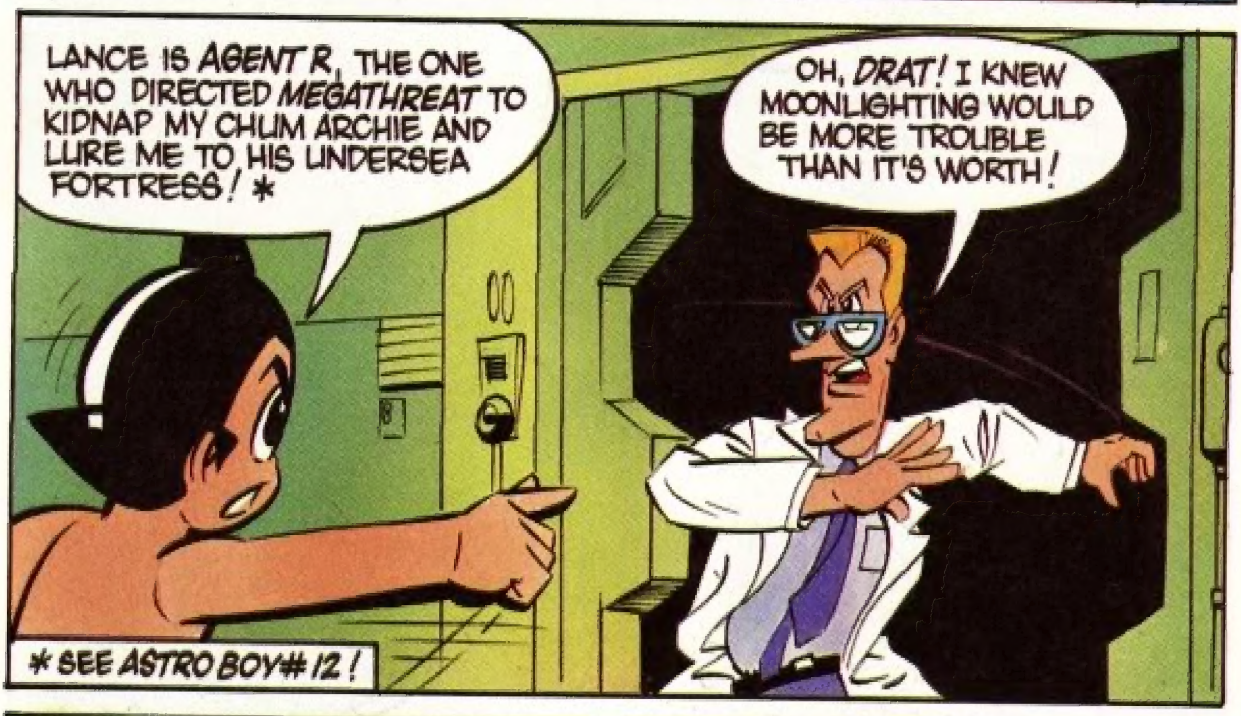
H-H-H-HI, M-MR. D-D-DINOSAUR—! Y-YOU DON'T REALLY WANT TO EAT ME, DO YOU?! I MEAN, I'M BARELY AN APPETIZER, Y'KNOW?
YARRRR.
ASTRO, THANK GOODNESS!
BE RIGHT WITH YOU, KRIS — URK!
CRUNCH!
JUST AS SOON AS I PUT THIS BRUTE'S LIGHTS OUT——
WHAM!
SHLURP!
WHUD!
—— THERE!!

ARE YOU OKAY?
SURE, NOTHING A LITTLE CRAZYGLUE WON'T FIX – HOW'BOUT YOU, KRIS?
I'M STILL SHAKING LIKE A LEAF! AND MY BIG, BRAVE DOG IS PROBABLY HALF WAY TO ANTARCTICA BY NOW!
BOY, THIS IS AMAZING – A REAL, LIVE DINOSAUR WANDERING AROUND! WHERE ON EARTH DID IT COME FROM?
BEATS ME! I THOUGHT THEY ALL KEELED OVER MILLIONS OF YEARS AGO. HEY, MAYBE SOMEONE CLONED THIS ONE FROM SOME FOSSILIZED REMAINS!
YEAH, MY DAD'S A GENETICIST, HE MIGHT KNOW... I'D BETTER GET THIS MONSTER DOWN TO THE INSTITUTE OF SCIENCE...
...BEFORE IT WAKES UP! BUT FIRST I'LL WALK YOU HOME, KRIS, THIS THING MIGHT HAVE PALS LURKING AROUND!
OKAY!
?!?


THIS IS INDEED EXTRAORDINARY... A LIVING DINOSAUR!
WHAT'S MOST UNUSUAL IS THAT IT'S RIGHT HERE — I MEAN, SURE, WE'VE LONG SUSPECTED THEY MAY HAVE SURVIVED DEEP IN THE AMAZON JUNGLES — BUT DOWNTOWN?!
GEE, DAD, ANY IDEA WHERE IT CAME FROM OR HOW IT GOT HERE?
I'M AFRAID NOT — BUT...
...I DO HAVE SOME CLUES. MY TESTS INDICATE THAT IT WAS SYNTHETICALLY FABRICATED — NOT BIOGENETICALLY, BUT ACTUALLY AT THE ATOMIC LEVEL!
YOU MEAN—?!
YES, DR. ELEFUN... SOMEONE HAS CRACKED THE MATRIX CODE AND MANUFACTURED THIS PARTICULAR CREATURE!
BUT IF THEY CAN DO THAT, THEN WITH ENOUGH RAW MATERIALS...


...THEY COULD CREATE AN ARMY OF THESE THINGS!
OR ANY OTHER "THINGS" THEY MIGHT DREAM UP! BUT WHY A DINOSAUR—!?
WE'RE OBVIOUSLY DEALING WITH AN INTELLIGENCE HERETOFORE UNKNOWN ON EARTH!
ATOMIC LEVEL, EH? I THINK WE SHOULD CALL OUR FOREMOST NUCLEAR PHYSICIST!..
DR. LUMIERE, WOULD YOU PLEASE COME DOWN TO THE BIO-LAB?
!
RIGHT AWAY, DR. ELEFUN!
ACK! IT'S AWAKE!
BOY HOWDY!! I GAVE IT ENOUGH SEDITIVES TO KNOCK OUT AN ENTIRE HERD OF ELEPHANTS— I'D BETTER CRANK IT UP A BIT!
GROWWWRRRR!
!

YES, DR., WHAT -- GOOD GRAVY- IS THAT A REAL --?!
TWEET! TWEET!
THAT VOICE!! I KNEW I'D HEARD IT BEFORE!
?
GRRRRRRRRRR


LANCE IS AGENT R, THE ONE WHO DIRECTED MEGATHREAT TO KIDNAP MY CHUM ARCHIE AND LURE ME TO HIS UNDERSEA FORTRESS! *
OH, DRAT! I KNEW MOONLIGHTING WOULD BE MORE TROUBLE THAN IT'S WORTH!
* SEE ASTRO BOY# 12!

THE LIGHTS!
FZZT!

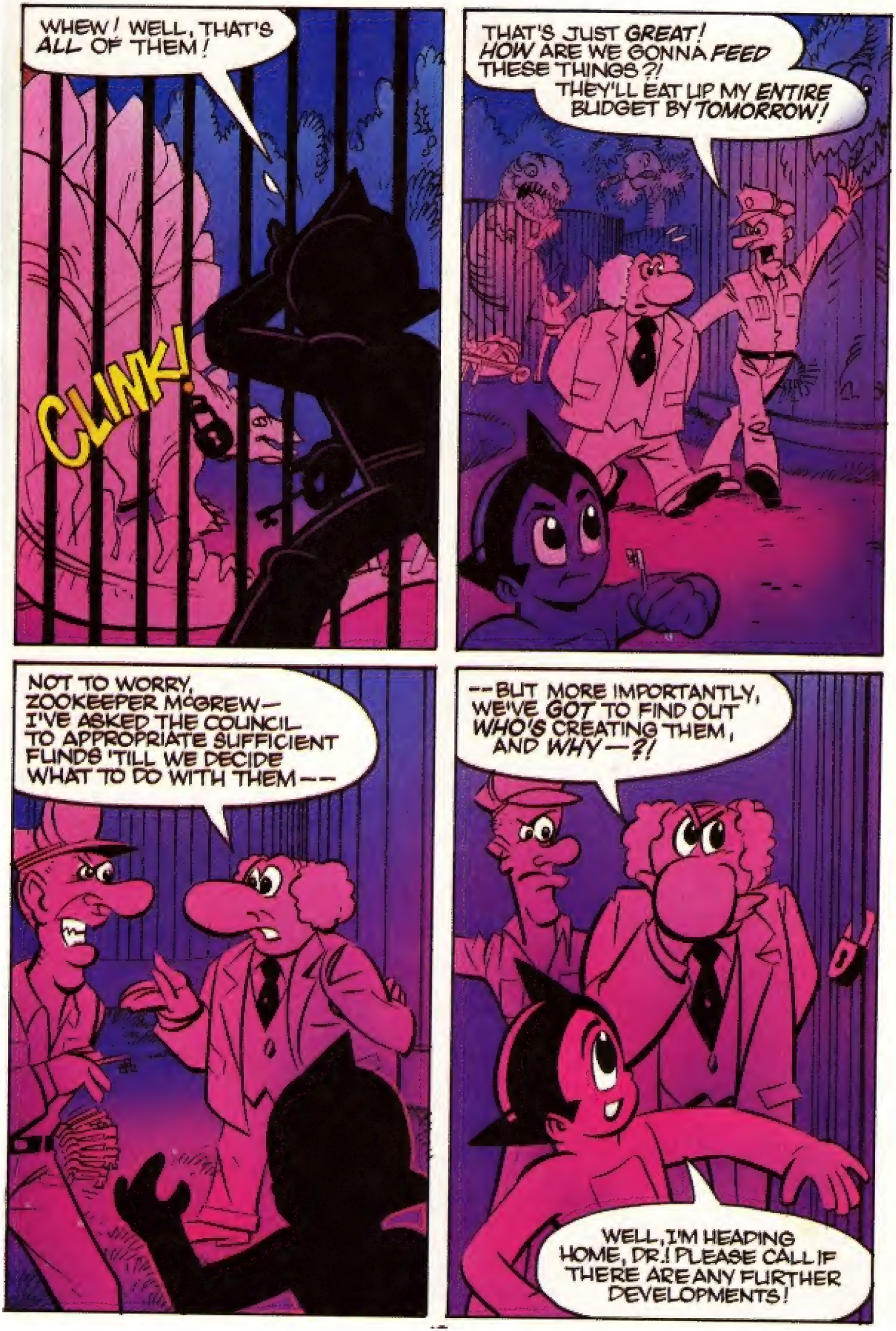
HE'S SHORTED OUT THE LIGHTS!
QUICK, TAMIL— YOU'RE THE DIRECTOR HERE... HOW DO WE GET THESE LIGHTS BACK ON?!
UH, WELL... LESSEE...
FORGET IT, I CAN FOLLOW HIS FOOTPRINTS BY SWITCHING TO INFRA-RED VISION! I'LL COLLAR THAT RAT!
I COULDA STAYED IN RESEARCH, BUT NO-O, I HADDA GET INVOLVED WITH MEGACORP!
NUCLEAR SCIENCE
MORON! BIMBO! DOPE!!
BZZT!
CLIK!
OOOPS! BETTER GRAB THIS!
HEH-HEH-HEH!

ALL RIGHT, YOU! ... WAIT, THOSE FOOTPRINTS GO STRAIGHT INTO THE WALL –!
A MINOR DELAY, ALLEY-OOP!
KABOOM!
AH, MUSIC TO MY EARS – HEH, HEH, HEH – THAT'LL BE THE END OF THAT LITTLE TROUBLEMAKER!
TRIP!
YEOW!
NOT SO FAST, LANCE, I'D LIKE TO CHAT!
WHO THE HECK?!
JUST CALL ME "THE PHANTOM OF THE INSTITUTE"!

ASTRO, MY BOY! CAN YOU HEAR ME?!
YEAH, AS SOON AS THIS RINGING IN MY EARS STOPS!
I GUESS LANCE GOT AWAY?
I'M AFRAID SO, AND THE ENTRANCE TO HIS ESCAPE ROUTE IS BURIED UNDER TONS OF DEBRIS.
DR. ELEFUN! CHIEF McLAW JUST CALLED! DINOSAURS HAVE BEEN SPOTTED ALL OVER TOWN! WHAT'LL WE DO?!
ASTRO, THE NEW ZOOLOGICAL GARDENS THEY'RE BUILDING ON THE EAST SIDE ARE NEARLY COMPLETE—
COULD YOU ROUND UP THOSE BEASTS AND CAGE THEM BEFORE THE POLICE OR MILITARY DO SOMETHING DRASTIC?
YOU BET! DANGEROUS OR NOT, THESE ANIMALS ARE A TERRIFIC FIND!

BOY! THESE THINGS ARE DANGEROUS!
I DON'T WANT TO HURT THEM, THOUGH!
SNAP!
SKREEEEEE!
GRONK!
SKREAH!

WHONK!
TOOT!
HONK! HONK!
BEEP!
EEEE-ARNK!

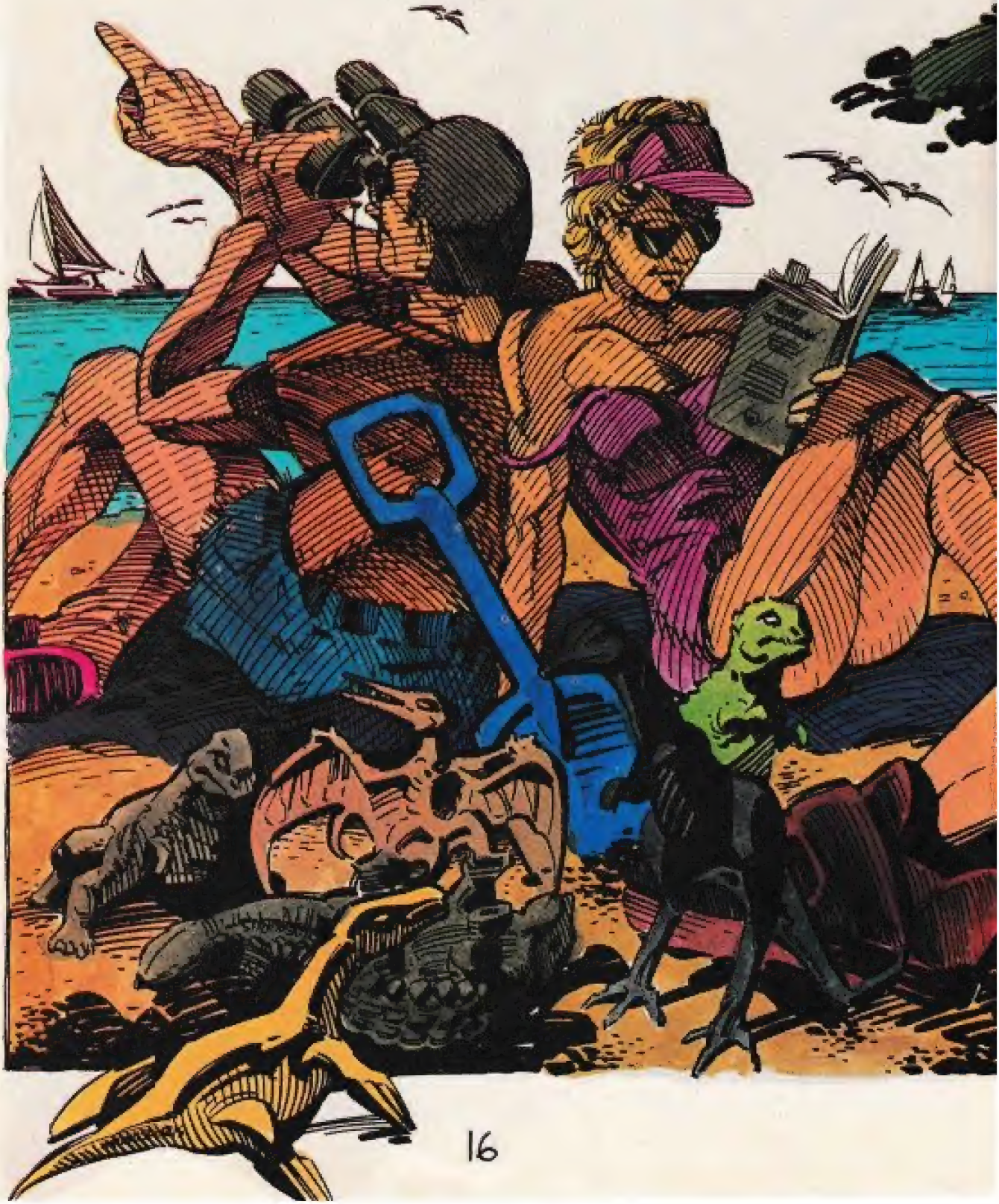

WHEW! WELL, THAT'S ALL OF THEM!
CLINK!
THAT'S JUST GREAT! HOW ARE WE GONNA FEED THESE THINGS?! THEY'LL EAT UP MY ENTIRE BUDGET BY TOMORROW!
NOT TO WORRY, ZOOKEEPER McGREW— I'VE ASKED THE COUNCIL TO APPROPRIATE SUFFICIENT FUNDS 'TILL WE DECIDE WHAT TO DO WITH THEM——
--BUT MORE IMPORTANTLY, WE'VE GOT TO FIND OUT WHO'S CREATING THEM, AND WHY—?!
WELL, I'M HEADING HOME, DR.! PLEASE CALL IF THERE ARE ANY FURTHER DEVELOPMENTS!

HI FOLKS, I'M HOME!!
SLAM
COME ON IN, DEAR. THERE'S SOMEONE WE WANT YOU TO MEET!
WHO—?
SON, THIS IS YOUR NEW LITTLE SISTER— ASTRO GIRL!
OBOY! MY BIG BROTHER!
UH... HI!
WHY, SURE! I KNOW JUST THE ONE! C'MON, SIS'!
ASTRO, IT'S QUITE LATE— WOULD YOU PLEASE READ YOUR SISTER A BED-TIME STORY?
OH, ASTRO, MOM AND DAD HAVE TOLD ME ALL ABOUT YOU AND YOUR ADVENTURES - I WANNA BE JUST LIKE YOU! I'M GONNA GO WHEREVER YOU GO AND DO—
YOU'LL LOVE THIS ONE, SIS... I'LL READ IT TO YOU AS SOON AS YOU'VE GOT YOUR P.J.'S ON, OKAY?
YEAH!!

ALL RIGHT NOW— HERE WE GO — LISTEN CAREFULLY, IT'S CALLED...
SIGH!
T-WRECKS
BY JOAN AND KEN STEACY
©1987
THE SUMMER WAS NEARLY SPENT. THE CICADAS BUZZED LESS FREQUENTLY, AND YET, I WAS CONTENT.
I HAD MY DINOSAURS!

THEY HAD BEEN MY FATHER'S, WHO HAD KEPT THEM HIDDEN AWAY OVER THE YEARS. A FINE GIFT; FOR WITH THEM HE PASSED ON HIS FASCINATION WITH THOSE MARVELLOUS CREATURES, AS WELL AS THE NAMES OF OTHERS WHO SHARED AND NURTURED THAT GREAT LOVE- BURIAN, BRADBURY, ZALLINGER, HALLETT, STOUT, HARRYHAUSEN etc.

I WAS DEEP IN THE MESOZOIC THAT SULTRY AFTERNOON, WHEN I SPIED SOMETHING ENORMOUS SNUFFLING THROUGH THE THICKET. I DECIDED TO INVESTIGATE!



WORDS FAIL TO CONVEY THE DELIGHT I FELT AT THAT MOMENT, AS THE MAGNIFICENT BEAST FIXED ME WITH A WARY BUT AMIABLE EYE!
THEN, IN RETURN FOR SOME RAISINS, I COAXED MY NEW FRIEND INTO GIVING ME A QUICK JAUNT AROUND THE NEIGHBORHOOD!

TRUNDLING ACROSS LAWNS AND DRIVEWAYS, I FAILED TO NOTICE THAT OUR ROUTE WAS TAKING US DIRECTLY INTO THE PATH OF THAT ARCH-VILLAIN, TYRANNOSAURUS REX!! ONE GLIMPSE OF THOSE BIG, NASTY TEETH AND I LEAPT FROM MY FRIEND'S FRILL, WHO WAS OBVIOUSLY INTENT ON A COLLISION COURSE!

THE IMPACT CREATED A HUGE RACKET, AND I HURRIED BACK TO THE BEACH- INTO THE ARMS OF MY VERY DISTRAUGHT PARENTS WHO HAD EQUATED MY DISSAPPEARANCE WITH ALL THE NOISE!

YOU KNOW, TO THIS DAY, THEY STILL DON'T BELIEVE MY VERSION OF WHAT HAPPENED!!

SO YOU SEE, SIS... THE LITTLE BOY IMAGINED THE WHOLE THING —
OH, ASTRO, THAT WAS A SWELL STORY! WILL YOU READ ME ONE EVERY NIGHT ?!
ASTRO, IT'S DR. ELEFUN ON THE VID-COM ... THEY'VE DETERMINED THAT THE AGENCY BEHIND THOSE DINO-SAURS IS DEFINITELY...
-OF EXTRA-TERRESTRIAL ORIGIN !!
MY GOSH! WE'RE ACTUALLY UP AGAINST —
-- ALIENS !! OH BOY!